

REPORT NO.

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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Nicaragua

CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBJECT Labor Activities of Partido Socialista de
Nicaragua during January 1951

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1. The Partido Socialista de Nicaragua (PSN), through its labor affiliate, the Confederacion General del Trabajo (CGT), continued during January 1951 to push its campaign against the rising cost of living. However, the government, which had appeared to pay little attention to the propaganda in the preceding two months, cracked down late in January and forced the PSN temporarily to abandon its efforts to unite the working people under the leadership of the CGT and the labor syndicates.
2. The CGT and the Federacion Nacionalista are still competing for the control of the labor movement, and the latter received some encouragement in January. However, the influence of the Nationalists is being largely dissipated through the intramural fight which continues between the two conflicting elements within this federation. The Nationalists called a meeting for 14 January in the Casa del Obrero in Managua, and it was fairly successful. Domingo Vargas and other PSN members were present, but they were unable to cause any disturbances because of the presence of Guardia soldiers and the implication that anyone molesting the speakers would be jailed.
3. When the Federacion Nacionalista called its meeting on 14 January the PSN decided to move up the proposed annual National Party Conference to 21 January, in the hope that some of the Nationalists would thereby find it possible to attend. Nevertheless, the PSN tried its best to place as many obstacles as possible in the path of its opponent, and a meeting protesting the increase in electricity rates was planned for the morning of 14 January in order to draw attention away from the Nationalists. The two groups are fighting to obtain a majority on the board of the Casa del Obrero, and in a meeting there on 5 January the ill feelings reached a point where knives and pistols were drawn. However, the only blood resulted from a fist fight between Agustin Herrera and Humberto Gabuardi.
4. In a meeting of the Executive Committee of the CGT on 10 January plans were completed for a cost-of-living protest assembly in Chinandega on the 14th. Mamel Perez Estrada, Adolfo Espinoza Castillo, Pedro Llena, and Tomas Blanco left for Chinandega on 12 January to assist in the organization of the Sunday meeting. However, the assembly, which was planned for the Alhambra Theatre, never took place. At the last minute local Guardia officials stepped in and said that prepared speeches could not be given inasmuch as they had not

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received prior approval. The crowd was dispersed, and the three Managua representatives were arrested and detained in the neighboring town of Chichigalpa.

5. The Managua meeting protesting the increase in the cost of electricity was changed to 15 January. All of the PSN-controlled syndicates had contributed to the propaganda expenses of this assembly, and leaflets had been issued. But again the authorities interfered, and Domingo Vargas, Secretary General of the CGT, was arrested at noon of that day. When the hour of the meeting arrived the Casa del Obrero was well guarded by soldiers, and the CGT prudently decided to call off the affair.
6. Plans for a Congreso Agrario have still not been abandoned by the CGT, and this assembly is tentatively set for 3 and 4 March in Leon. An organizing committee has been named, and efforts are being made to interest agricultural groups throughout the country. Present plans call for the discussion of the following basic points; uncultivated lands, rented properties, lands belonging to indigenous communities, government-owned farms, and land despoiled because of political influences.
7. The official CGT paper, Voz Sindical, appeared on each Saturday throughout January, as a result of determined efforts on the part of labor leaders. It is believed that CGT influence would be seriously damaged by the failure of the paper to appear regularly. A shortage of funds had apparently doomed the 6 January issue, but by the evening of that day sufficient money had been collected to cover printing costs. In general Voz Sindical limits itself to local matters of labor interest and touches only lightly on controversial subjects. However, the 27 January number violently attacked the recent Latin American labor conference in Mexico City. The assembly, which was labeled a failure, was reportedly headed by odious leaders, political agents, and representatives of foreign monopolies. The majority of the delegations were reportedly spurious, fabricated simply to give the United States a majority. It was stated that the expenses of the congress were paid by the United States Embassy.
8. It has been reported that Absalon Gonzalez is now definitely retired from CGT affairs, and that he will be relieved of his position as Secretary General at the next general CGT conference. Domingo Vargas is slated to be the next Secretary General, but as he is now in prison, Humberto Gabuardi is temporarily 25X6 at the head of the organization.
9.
10. The recent executive decree to the effect that the governing board of the Casa del Obrero will be named by the Ministry of Labor has caused indignation in the PSN and CGT circles. The same decree states that any person with foreign ideas will be expelled from the workers' centers. It is planned to make a public protest to Somoza on the part of the CGT and its affiliated organizations. Many party members have commented that American Embassy pressure was behind this decree. Notwithstanding the existing government attitude the PSN plans to continue protesting vigorously against all restrictive measures.
11. Present indications are that Somoza plans to extend greater aid to the Federacion Nacionalista. It is reported that Somoza has taken steps to acquire a printing shop for use of Nationalists. PSN leaders are worried, and are endeavoring to find out exactly how much help Somoza has promised the anti-Communist federation.

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